COMPUTERWORLD
DEFINING TECHNOLOGY FOR AUSTRALIA'S IT LEADERS

Home   Wednesday, 7 November 2001

Stallion eyes big-budget bandwidth users

BY PETE YOUNG
7 November, 2001 8:25 BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

One of the great survivors among Australian hardware companies, communications equipment maker Stallion Technologies, is launching itself up the food chain.

The networking vendor is dangling a new generation of its bandwidth boosting technology in front of companies with larger data links and larger comms budgets.

Multilink-IP, a superset of Stallion's bandwidth bonding technology for Internet-based virtual private networks, ships this month in Australia and the US.

Stallion says the service-independent offering will operate across any network with IP access points, including frame relay, T3/T1, xDSL, satellite and ATM.

Multilink-IP lets customers incrementally bundle lower-speed connections into a higher bandwidth virtual connection rather than jump to a high-capacity service that may exceed demand.

The same job can be done by existing multilink technologies such as ML-Frame Relay and ML-PPP but they come as proprietary offerings and in Stallion's view are less nimble than its new kid on the block.

For organisations whose data transfer requirements sit in large bandwidth gaps such as those between T1 (1.5Mbps) and T3 (45Mbps), the scalability offered by ML-IP is tempting.

"Those are huge leaps and until now the only ways of bridging them were all proprietary and needed vendors to provide customer premises equipment and routers in every point of presence," says Stallion CTO Tony Merenda.

"With ML-IP, if a business wants to take multiple DSL lines and bond them together, they can implement it without any cooperation from their telcos."

ML-IP can be seen as a superset of Stallion's ePipe range of Internet and VPN gateways and concentrators.

It can tap into large opportunities in the US market where 30,000 companies operate 800,000 frame relay connections, says Stallion's US-based based vice president of business development Mark Calkins.

ML-IP will give service providers the capacity to offer their customers bandwidth scalability without building new infrastructure, Calkins says.

In Australia, organisations moving data across Telstra's private IP network, TPIPS, will be another for Stallion's new product. Combining TPIPS access with ML-IP should present organisations with extremely cost-effective options, claims Merenda.

"We see opportunities for companies in rural areas to get small branches with PSTN access onto a private network for virtually nothing."

In addition to ISPs and telcos, Stallion is talking to several manufacturers of network devices about incorporating ML-IP into their platforms.

Merenda said an ongoing patent tiff with US rival Digi International was confined to an earlier range of terminal server products and would not affect ML-IP's rollout. Resolving the legal squabble could take another six months, he estimated.